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THE BAPTIST

# Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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## Christianity returning to 'apostolic age'?

WILMORE, Ky. (ABP) — The future of Christianity is being modeled by congregations that resemble churches from the first century, according to church strategist George Hunter.

That's because the nature of the world is changing, and so is the type of church that's most effective at reaching non-Christians, said Hunter, a professor at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Ky.

Hunter has written a new book on the topic, "Church for the Unchurched."

ty in the Western world in the last three centuries," Hunter claimed.

Several factors support that assertion, he said.

"The people of Europe and North America are increasingly secular," he explained.

However, "the Enlightenment, which provided the worldview for the secular West, is a spent force. Consequently, people are increasingly... searching for a satisfying world view."

"We are, once again, in an 'apostolic age' — much like the age early Christianity engaged," he added. In that era, many non-

today "still has trouble perceiving the harvest" that is available, Hunter insisted.

"Most churches continue 'doing church' as usual, as though most people in our communities are Christians, as though ministry is merely the nurture and care of existing Christians. Many church leaders are in denial regarding the growing number of secular pre-Christians in their community."

However, those "pre-Christians" are people who have not yet come to faith in Christ but are searching desperately for meaning and fulfillment, he said.

They are people who are inclined to be receptive to the gospel if Christians will just befriend them and share their faith.

As an answer to pre-Christians' spiritual needs, God has raised up "apostolic congregations" that are able to lead them to faith in Christ and help them grow spiritually, Hunter maintained.

"What makes these churches different is not a single feature like prayer, small groups or seven-days-a-week scheduling but a combination of multiple features that function synergistically," he reported.

The churches also reach people out of members' relationships with unbelievers, and they function on the force of empowered, motivated laity.

"Cultural relevance is a towering feature of these churches," he said, explaining churches that are effective in reaching people for Christ are understandable and approachable in their individual communities.

"What that looks like varies from region to region and target population to target population," he said.

In addition to music and worship style, "the approach to learning, clothing, leadership styles and, when possible, architecture were all a part of culture relevance," he said.

"I saw churches, without knowing what to call it, taking a more comprehensive approach to being culturally relevant."

Hunter encountered two surprises while researching these churches, he said.

"The biggest surprise is that all have adequate ongoing pastoral care delivered by a lay person," he said. "Most of these churches identify, train and deploy godly people serving as the shepherd or pastor of their own flock..."

"Another surprise (was) that they do not do evangelism the way the books on evangelism prescribe... Their style of evangelism is usually much more situationally tailored to the person, more of a two-way conversation than a one-way presentation."

"Almost always, the Christian faith is shared in response to the questions or doubts of the individual, rather than the Christian controlling the agenda," he said.

Hunter's research on today's "apostolic churches" gave him confidence that people of all generations in society can be reached with the gospel.

"The test is whether we care enough and dare enough to re-invent church enough to begin where people are rather than where we would like them to be."

### 'Apostolic' churches

#### Apostolic churches:

- ◆ Prepare their people in multiple ways by rooting them in Scripture, deepening them in prayer, teaching them compassion for sinners and obedience to the Great Commission, by scripting them with an apostolic vision of what people can become.
- ◆ Clarify the goal of outreach — to turn irreligious people into fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.
- ◆ Understand evangelism as a process. Effective evangelism takes place in stages, over time, not necessarily instantly, he said.
- ◆ Regard outreach as lay ministry. Laypeople are gifted by God to do ministry, so all Christians are called to the ministry of witness and evangelism.
- ◆ Train their people for outreach with specific emphasis on evangelism.
- ◆ Practice social-network evangelism, naturally sharing their faith with people they know through work, neighborhood,

school and other social groups.

- ◆ Offer "faith once delivered to the saints," with a focus on communicating the Bible's timeless message to non-Christians in their communities.
- ◆ Address the 'life concerns' of pre-Christians and Christians, dealing with health, parenting, family and social relationships, and other concerns that focus on the uncertainties of the future, the crises of the present, and the unexplainable events of the past.
- ◆ Use the language of the target population, understanding how to communicate the gospel in the everyday language of unchurched people.
- ◆ Represent the gospel with generational relevance, with ministry and message relating directly to youth and young adults.

Source: George Hunter  
Asbury Theological Seminary

He also discussed his findings in the latest issue of "Next," a newsletter published by Leadership Network.

"The Christian movement now faces its greatest opportunity

Christians were searching for meaning and eagerly responded to the Christian message, producing a "harvest" of new converts, he said.

Unfortunately, the church

### WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

'96 Convention meets

3

"Merry Christmas, Korea"

4

MBCB officers elected

5

Letters to the editor

6

### Top 10 Best Sellers

#### HARDBACK

1. In the Grip of Grace, Max Lucado (Word)
2. Purpose Driven Church, Rick Warren (Bantam)
3. Encountering God, Henry Blackaby & Beverly Blackaby (Bantam)
4. The Power of a Praying Wife, Stormy Omartini (Bantam)

#### PAPERBACK

1. The Beginning of the End, John Hagee (Nelson)
2. Sports & Tide, Patsy Clairmont (Word)
3. What Happens When Women Pray, Evelyn Christensen (Scripture Press)
4. Right From Wrong, Josh McDowell (Word)
5. I'm Alone With God, Emily (Word)

### Looking back

#### 10 years ago

Royal Ambassadors (RA) from First Church, Amory, continue to be one of the most active RA units in Mississippi, working in the Amory Food Bank, helping distribute Bibles during a mission trip to Memphis, and providing labor for development of Central Hills Retreat near Kosciusko.

#### 20 years ago

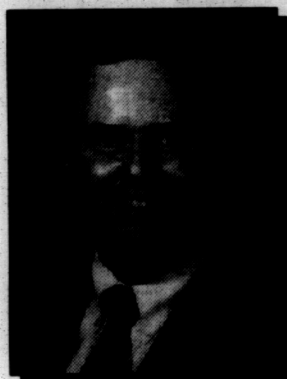
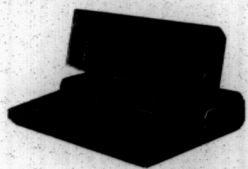
Using powerful microscopes and thread too fine to be seen by the unaided eye, Mississippi Baptist Medical Center in Jackson begins pioneering work in the microsurgical field relating to reattachment of severed fingers. Reattachment has already been successful for a pair of patients.

#### 50 years ago

Mrs. and Mrs. R.E.L. Polk, two of the few surviving charter members of Phalti Church in Jefferson Davis County, receive special recognition from the church for giving the single largest gift in the history of the church, to be used for total replacement of worn pews in the sanctuary.



## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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# Mississippi Baptists: doing the Lord's work

There are a thousand reasons why I am grateful to be a Mississippi Baptist. Here's a couple:

The 161st annual session of the Mississippi Baptist Convention was held Oct. 29-30, preceded by the Mississippi Baptist Pastor's Conference on Oct. 28.

In between the convening of the Pastor's Conference and the Convention adjournment three days later, thousands of Mississippi Baptists were involved in dozens of meetings and other gatherings that brought honor to our efforts to win Mississippi and the world to Jesus.

Pastor's Conference attendees heard strong, inspired preaching.

Meanwhile, the Ministers' Wives Conference was going on at the same time in another part of First Church, Jackson, and the Mississippi Baptist Religious Education Association was meeting at Colonial Heights Church in north Jackson.

Missions fellowship meetings were being held all over the First Church complex, climaxed by the annual Lay Missions banquet that evening. Over 450 people attended.

That was just Monday's program.

The next day-and-a-half seemed to race by as the Convention sessions began and Mississippi Baptists came together to praise the Lord for the mighty work he is doing through the organization he created and named the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

There was a sweet spirit in the place — a feeling of spiritual fraternity where even

controversial issues were debated and settled with a Christian statesmanship sadly lacking in many arenas of our denomination.

I suppose there were "winners" and "losers," although that terminology doesn't really describe Mississippi Baptists in our corporate life.

It was obvious during the convention that Mississippi Baptists have strong opinions, but it was equally obvious that we have the will to press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called us heavenward in Christ Jesus (Phil 3:14).

Not all religious organizations can make that statement. Mississippi Baptists can claim it and back it up.

Secondly, I was reminded recently that Mississippi Baptists are a generous people who seek to answer physical needs as well as spiritual needs.

When I study the bound volumes of "The Baptist Record" going back more than 50 years, I read article after article about Mississippi Baptists responding to people's needs all over the world.

Sending Bibles to Russia after World War II. Feeding thousands of children and rebuilding churches after the Japanese were driven from China. Teaching African farmers how to dig wells and manage soil for maximum crop yield. Caring for people's medical needs all over the globe.

In just the past week, Mississippi Baptists shipped 52 tons of food prepaid to famine-stricken North Korea.

You read right — Mississippi Baptists donated 103,000 pounds of food and \$27,000 to ship it to communist-dominated, offi-



cially atheist North Korea with the message, "Love gift from Southern Baptist Christians of the United States of America."

Thank God for such a dedicated people, anchored in the Word and driven to accomplish our Lord's Great Commission.

I am grateful to be a Mississippi Baptist.

**G**od's hand is so very evident in every aspect of Southern Baptist work in our state.

That is certainly no less true in and through the ministry of The Baptist Children's Village (BCV).

In October of 1995 God began to prepare my heart with a vision of what he wanted to do at BCV. He led me through Blackaby's book, "Experiencing God."

With each chapter he echoed this question, "Are you willing to see what I will do?"

In the midst of this study I declared, "God, I'm tired of seeing what Ronny Robinson can do, or what a Board can do, or a few churches, God, I want to see what you will do!"

From that early morning confusion, God burdened my heart to challenge 365 churches to operate BCV for one day (\$7500) in 1997.

I reminded God that only 11 churches had financially done this in the past year. Everyone I shared this plan with felt it was impossible.

"Are you crazy?" was a normal response. I found that with each negative response my assurance of God's hand in this became even more certain.

I asked God if he would allow me to throw out a fleece, and he did. Within a matter of days he led me to a Christian businessman in our state.

As I shared this vision with that man, he appeared to be inspired with vision that only comes from God.

He stated to me that when (not if) 365 churches make this

## GUEST OPINION:

### Happy Birthday, BCV

By Ronny Robinson, Executive Director

Mississippi Baptist Children's Village

commitment, he would personally match that gift (approximately 2.8 million dollars).

I was so at a loss of words, I finally blurted out, "When you do this I'll take your matching money and put it in endowment."

He quickly responded that he would not allow any of the matching monies to be put in endowment.

This individual feels strongly that to do so would be to tell God, "Thank you for providing for us today, but just in case you don't provide for our needs tomorrow, I will have this to fall back on."

It is the desire of this individual that BCV have the opportunity to provide for the many acutely disturbed children whose needs are not currently being met because of lack of funding.

There are hundreds of children in the state who are falling through the cracks because we are not equipped to provide the Christian, professional staff needed to minister to their acute emotional needs.

BCV and this individual

desire jointly that we not have to turn down any child in our state because we are not equipped to care for such needs.

Mississippi Baptists have ministered to children and families through BCV for 99 years.

This ministry will celebrate its 100th birthday in 1997.

I dare say that there is not even one Southern Baptist church in this state that has not been impacted by this ministry in the past 99 years.

If you are excited about the first 100 years, I know you will want to join us as we begin the second century with a commitment to reach out to every hurting child and family that cries in Mississippi.

Will you pray with me about joining God in this vital ministry to hurting children?

The ladies of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union have caught this vision and are joining hands with the Village in 1997.

They are planning birthday parties in practically every association in Mississippi to celebrate the 100th birthday. How can you be a part of this vision?

Lead your church to commit to operate BCV for one day in 1997.

If you feel this challenge is too great, encourage another neighboring church to join you in operating BCV for one day.

Lead your church during November to make this commitment, then return your commitment card to the Village.

Each church will have the entire 12 months of 1997 to fulfill their commitment. There is no set date for the money to come to the Village.

No other request for any offering will be made to any church making this commitment. On Mother's Day, you will only receive a letter thanking you for operating BCV for one day.

God has required the Village to step out in faith and purchase 40,000 wall calendars as gifts for participating church families.

If a church, for example, has 100 church families and that church commits to this challenge, 100 wall calendars will be brought to your church — one for each family.

These calendars are not for fundraising. They are gifts to remind you that you are a part of Mississippi's Largest Family.

Will you pray about this challenge?

Lead your church to join 364 others in celebrating 100 years of helping children and their families.

If you need a commitment card or have questions, please call Chrystelle Thames, BCV public relations director at (601) 922-2242.



# '96 MBC messengers approve covenant, set record Cooperative Program budget

By Tim Nicholas  
MBCB Communications Director

Messengers to the 161st annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) Oct. 29-30 in Jackson approved sweeping changes in the relationship between the state convention and its institutions, and unanimously approved a record \$24.1 million state Cooperative Program (CP) budget for 1997.

Registered messengers totaled 1,557, the smallest number in recent years. A total of 1,635 messengers attended the 1995 meeting.

Messengers approved by a substantial majority the recommendation of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) that the MBC constitution be amended to allow the convention to enter into a "covenant of cooperation" with trustees of MBC institutions, which include:

— Mississippi Baptist Medical Center (MBMC) in Jackson.

— Mississippi Baptist Children's Village (BCV) headquartered in Jackson.

— Blue Mountain College in Blue Mountain.

— William Carey College in Hattiesburg.

— Mississippi College in Clinton.

Individual trustees will be asked yearly to sign a covenant of

cooperation, which signifies that the trustee will work to keep the institution "Christian in its purpose, solid in its business practices, compassionate in its ministry, and our judgments as near the mind of Christ as possible."

Supporters of the measure say the covenant relationship will allow MBC to avoid the plight of many other state conventions that have lost institutions when trustees voted to break away.

Under the plan, the MBC committee on nominations and each institution's board of trustees will jointly submit new trustee nominations to a vote by convention messengers.

The covenant proposal was prompted by several events,

each affecting the other.

Mississippi College (MC) trustees voted two years ago to withdraw from MBC in order to elect their own trustees.

Negotiations brought MC back into the MBC fold, but with the concession that MC trustees would be able to nominate a portion of their own trustee replacements, along with convention nominees from the MBC nominating committee, for messenger approval.

In the wake of that move, MBCB executive director Bill Causey was directed by messengers to study the charters of the other institutions and make recommendations to prevent similar withdrawals among the convention's other institutions.

At the 1995 MBC, read into the minutes was a proposed constitutional change which would have prevented any institution from making a charter change without MBC approval.

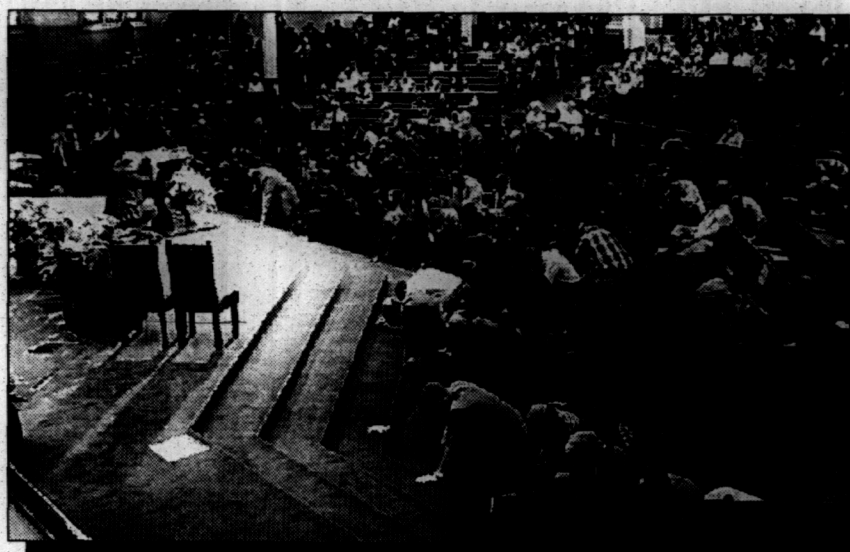
Causey explained that the proposed constitutional change was contrary to state law, and "spooked" trustees of Mississippi Baptist Medical Center (MBMC) into legally separating from MBC.

Causey said the hospital trustees' "real desire is not to separate from the Mississippi Baptist Convention, though they

had to go ahead with the charter change, but they would be more than happy to come back home if we could provide them the opportunity to work with freedom to adapt themselves to what they need to do in order to accommodate themselves to the changing health care scene in America."

John Voss, MBMC legal counsel and pastor of Calvary Church, Hattiesburg, told messengers that hospital trustees had reaffirmed their intent to retain a relationship with Mississippi Baptists, but the hospital was required by the state to retain "final determination of all corporate matters."

"Legally, it is possible for the (Baptist) agencies to go their separate ways. Fraternally,



there is no desire to do that. The covenant statement is the best answer for the long-term, solid, enduring relationship between the convention and its agencies," Voss said.

Causey pointed out that no other institution lost to Baptists had ever been brought back into the fold, but Mississippi Baptists have brought two back: MC and MBMC.

Convention messengers voted down a substitute motion proposed by Johnny Sykes, pastor of Friendship Church in Pike Association, that would have retained the present system of nominating all trustees exclusively through the MBC committee on nominations.

A second substitute motion also failed, this one proposed by Clay Cloer, pastor of Highland Church, Senatobia, who called for a year of study before implementation and said the new nomination process would "remove control over these institutions."

Asked by a messenger during the debate how binding the covenant would be on the institutions, Causey responded, "As binding as the character of the heads of our institutions and their trustees."

Messengers also okayed a constitutional change to allow each MBC institution to have up to 24 trustees. Boards were previously limited to 15 trustees.

The 1997 Cooperative Program budget of \$24,145,086 is to be divided 37% (\$8,933,682) for Southern Baptist Convention causes outside the state, and 63% (\$15,211,404) for Mississippi Baptist causes.

Of that 63%, \$690,000 is returned to Mississippi churches for church annuity matching participation. The percentage division has been in effect for several years.

Jimmy Porter, pastor of First church, McComb, was elected without opposition to serve a second term as MBC president.

Pews empty in the sanctuary of First Church, Jackson, as Paul Jones (at pulpit), executive director of the Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission, issues a call to renewal at the Oct. 29 morning session of the 1996 Mississippi Baptist Convention. Jones asked messengers to take their prayer for renewal into their churches when they returned home. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

# Record

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David Raddin, pastor of First Church, Yazoo City, was elected first vice president by a vote of 539-400 over Edgar Lee Wright, pastor of Morgantown Church, Natchez.

Martin Hayden, pastor of Liberty Church, Liberty, was elected second vice president by a vote of 393-105 over Mark Long, pastor of Perkinston Church, Perkinston.

Retired director of missions



J. W. Brister of Madison was reelected as recording secretary.

Associate recording secretary David Sellers, pastor of Tylertown Church, Tylertown, declined another term and will be replaced by retired pastor Gus Merritt of Newton, currently interim pastor at New Hope Church, Meridian.

The 1997 MBC annual meeting will take place Oct. 28-29 at First Church, Jackson.

Jim Futral, pastor of Broadmoor Church, Jackson, was selected to preach the 1997 convention sermon.

Kiely Young, pastor of First Church, Gulfport, was named to serve as alternate preacher.

Mississippi Baptist Convention officers for 1997 include (from left) first vice-president David Raddin, pastor of First Church, Yazoo City; president Jimmy Porter, pastor of First Church, McComb; assistant recording secretary Gus Merritt of Newton, interim pastor at New Hope Church, Meridian; and recording secretary J.W. Brister of Madison, retired director of missions. Not pictured is second vice-president Martin Hayden, pastor of Liberty Church, Liberty. (Photo by Tim Nicholas)



# Mississippi Baptists answer Korean famine

By Carl M. White  
Associate Editor

Mississippi Baptists opened their hearts and pantries by giving over 1,300 boxes of food to the people of famine-stricken North Korea.

In addition, almost \$27,000 was given to cover shipping costs of the food and to purchase additional food supplies overseas, according to Paul Harrell, director of the Brotherhood Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB).

Called "Merry Christmas Korea," the Brotherhood Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention asked the Woman's Missionary Unions and Brotherhood Departments of the Arkansas, Tennessee and Mississippi Baptist conventions to each provide 200 boxes of food in response to the needs of

starving North Korean citizens.

"This is an enormous compliment to the churches, pastors, and directors of missions in our state," said Bill Causey, MBCB executive director-treasurer.

"Having been asked to provide 200 (boxes), and then providing 1,355 boxes, is an indication of the heart of Mississippi Baptists," he said.

Marjean Patterson, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, said, "When I heard that our goal for boxes of food for North Korea amounted to 200, I silently wondered, 'Just how much over that goal will our people give?'"

"I knew that the practice of Mississippi Baptists is to do the kind, generous, loving thing where need is perceived, so I was not surprised when Paul Harrell began to bring reports of the number of boxes of food which had been pledged."

"When you ask Mississippi Baptist to respond to a ministry

they respond out of a mission heart. Our directors of missions became point men in their associations for this project.

"Through their efforts 1,500 boxes were distributed," Harrell said.

On Monday and Tuesday (Oct. 28-29) of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, 1,355 boxes totaling 102,980 lbs — almost 52 tons — were dropped off behind the Baptist Building.

Each box weighed an average of 76 lbs and contained approximately \$32 worth of food items, including dried beans, corn meal, all-purpose flour, spaghetti, rice and powdered milk.

A sticker on each box reads in English and Korean, "Love gift from Southern Baptist Christians of the United States of America."

Lewis Myers, Vice President for World A Strategies at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va., said, "I am absolutely delighted over the response of Mississippi Baptist. However, having observed and been a part of Mississippi Baptists for 50 of my 60 plus years, I'm not surprised."

"We look at this (project) from two points of view. One, it is an opportunity to meet a tremendous need in light of the crop failures and starvation in North Korea."

"Two, it is an opportunity to demonstrate Christian love to a section of the world that has isolated itself from any expression of it," he added.

Jim Didlake, MBCB Brotherhood consultant, said

64 of the 71 associations in the state had churches send boxes.

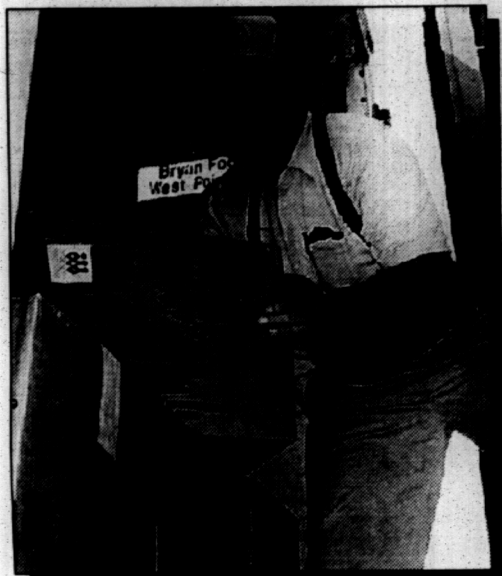
A box will feed a family of four for up to one month, meaning Mississippi Baptists are providing a month's food for 5,420 people.

The food boxes were transported to Brotherhood headquarters in Memphis on Oct. 30 to be shipped to Pyongyang, North Korea in mid-November.

"In my heart, I believe that many prayers accompanied those boxes which are bound for North Korea," Patterson said.

"This good deed is just another way Mississippi Baptists seek to provide a witness to a non Christian world," Harrell said.

"I am proud to be a Christian who lives in Mississippi," he added.



Ronnie Ferrell of Belzoni, a disaster relief volunteer, moves boxes of food from a Bryan Foods truck to the container bound for North Korea. The truck delivered 75 boxes from the Oktibbeha, Lowndes and Clay Associations. (photo by Carl M. White)

## Volunteer honoree skips banquet; offers good reason for his absence

By Tim Nicholas  
MBCB Communications Director

While more than 450 Mississippi Baptists gathered in Jackson Oct. 28 for the annual Lay Missions Conference, one of the volunteer honorees was recuperating from injuries sustained while doing volunteer work a few days earlier.

Hayes Graves, layman from First Church, Brandon, suffered a subdural hematoma (bleeding in the brain) when he fell from a ladder Oct. 24 while coordinating a church rebuilding project at Kone Hill Missionary Baptist Church in rural Rankin County.

Graves' daughter, Kathy Wylie, attended the conference and accepted the honor on behalf of her father.

"Mother says he's like a kid at Christmas when there's a new project. We've got an awesome God who can cradle a 72-year-

old man when he falls from an eight-foot ladder," she said.

Wylie told the group that when she visited her father in the hospital after the fall, he was bending his elbow, trying to work out soreness from the fall. She told him he might want to throw a ball for a while.

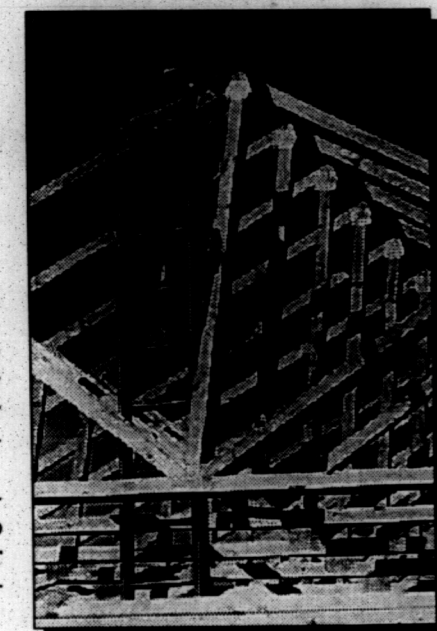
"I was thinking more like a hammer," she said he responded.

Graves also helped plan the new Mississippi Baptist Disaster Relief Unit, a tractor-trailer outfit for feeding after disasters around the state and nation.

Honored along with Graves was Mackie Davis of Hattiesburg, who has worked for the past three years as volunteer assistant stateside coordinator for Mississippi Baptist Partnership Office.

Davis handles medical-dental partnership projects and so far in 1996 has led volunteer mission trips to Alaska, Honduras, and Colorado.

Featured speaker at the Lay Missions banquet on the evening of Oct. 28 was Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.



Hayes Graves installs roof trusses at Kone Hill Missionary Baptist Church in Rankin County, less than an hour before he fell from the ladder. Graves is expected to make a full recovery. Kone Hill was destroyed earlier this year when lightning touched off a fire. (Photo by Tim Nicholas)

## RA Day features football players, missionary, testimonies

By Tim Nicholas  
MBCB Communications Director

Royal Ambassador (RA) Day at Mississippi College (MC) on Oct. 26 drew 1,289 Royal Ambassadors and their leaders to Clinton for a Christian rally prior to the football game between MC and West Alabama College.

Jeff Parker, Southern Baptist missionary to England, was featured at the rally along with personal testimonies from MC football players and an exhibition by the MC cheerleaders.

Parker told the boys the biblical story of Jesus healing

blind Bartimaeus, who realized when Jesus came near that "his opportunity was never going to come again."

Parker likened that story to the necessity of accepting Jesus as Lord and Savior. The opportunity may not come again, he said.

"Priority," a singing group from the MC Baptist Student Union, also performed.

Clay Stegall of Pontotoc, tight end on the MC football team, told the boys, "The most important thing you can do is trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and ask him into your life."



Jeff Parker (left), Southern Baptist missionary to England, speaks to Royal Ambassadors (RA) from Castlewoods Church, Brandon, during RA Day at Mississippi College on Oct. 26. From left are Benjamin McDonald, 10; Josh Alkire, 8; Anthony Rigdon, 10; and Dwight Rigdon. (Photo by Tim Nicholas)

"If we reduce missions to its essence, it would be 'Jesus loves everybody; Jesus loves me. Not everybody knows that, so he wants me to go and tell,'" she said.

Robert Brown, pastor of Grace Community Church in Tchula, traced his life changes from his days as a construction worker in Toledo, Ohio, to his present call as pastor of a Baptist church in a small Mississippi town.

"God has so graced us," he said.



# Gulfport businessman gambles with ruin

By William H. Perkins Jr.  
Editor

Final in a series

Harley (not his real name) didn't have to go all the way into the pit. Just teetering on the edge was enough for him.

"I never gambled in my life. I voted 'no' in the referendum and swore I'd never go in one, but when the casinos opened on the coast, I went out of curiosity," said the Gulfport small businessman — a lifelong Gulf Coast resident and churchgoing Southern Baptist.

Within three months, he was frequenting the casinos seven nights a week, forsaking his young wife and newborn baby. He stopped only long enough to put on a fresh change of clothes and go to work when the sun came up.

Harley knew he was in trouble.

"Every time I'd leave a casino, I'd be sick to my stomach, hating myself. I thought, 'You

should have paid the house note. You should have paid the insurance.' It was like a craving for a drug," Harley said.

On the hook for more than \$30,000 in losses, Harley's relationship with his wife began to founder even as his addiction grew stronger.

"She didn't understand why I'd go down there just to lose. At one point, I had to take the day's receipts from my business and give it to my wife at night so I wouldn't lose that money," he said.

A pastor friend intervened with a shock treatment that jarred Harley out of his fantasy world.

"He asked me what I'd do if he told me my wife was having an affair. I couldn't believe it; I just sat in his car dumbfounded. Then he told me she wasn't having an affair, but that was exactly what I was doing to her with my gambling," Harley explained.

From that point, Harley determined to set things right.

It hasn't been easy, but he is working to rebuild his relationship with his wife and focus on important goals.

"I still have the urge to go to the casinos. Before I started gambling, I slept all night. Now I wake up at 3 a.m. and can't go back to sleep. I pray that God will take away this urge and give me peace," he said.

Harley describes the scourge of casinos in Mississippi as "spiritual warfare."

"I don't know if you believe in evil spirits that can control you, but I do. I would head for a casino with my heart full of Jesus, and come out with Jesus gone and evil in his place.

"Gambling interferes with your relationship to Christ, and that should be enough to keep you out.

"Don't give the devil this opportunity to get a foothold in your life. It may be years before you realize it, but if you put yourself in that situation, you'll find out eventually," he warned.

Harley is concerned that people don't see legalized gambling for what it truly is.

"The casual gambler doesn't see the hurt and misery. If we don't consider gambling the same as alcohol and drugs, we're not looking at the whole picture. It's the same," he said.

Harley's message is that a person can stop the ruinous slide before all is lost.

"At this point, I am as free as I've ever been. You can look away, but it's going to take God to keep you strong.

"God does not take joy in our foolishness, and gambling is foolish," he said.

## GAMBLING



For more  
information  
on gambling,  
contact:

**Christian Action Commission of the Miss. Baptist Convention**  
Paul G. Jones II, Executive Director  
P.O. Box 530  
Jackson, MS 39205-0530  
(601) 968-3800  
(800) 748-1651 (outside Jackson)

**National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling**  
Field Operations - Tom Grey,  
414 Gere St.  
Galena, IL 61036  
(318) 380-5060 ext. 241

Information Center - Ronald Hyde,  
540 S. Palisade Dr.  
Orem, UT 84058  
1-800-664-2680  
[www.iquest.net/cpage/ncalg](http://www.iquest.net/cpage/ncalg)

**Christian Life Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention**  
Richard Land, Executive Director  
901 Commerce St., Suite 550,  
Nashville, TN 37203-3696  
(615) 244-2495

## Mississippi Baptist Convention Board



Officers of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board for 1996-97 (from left) Bob Simmons of Meridian, retired missionary, vice-president; Kermit McGregor, pastor of First Church, Mendenhall, president; and Jerry Mixon, pastor of Rocky Creek Church, Lumberton, secretary. The officers were elected Oct. 30 during the Board's organizational meeting following the adjournment of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

### 1996-97 MBCB Executive Committee

Kan Anderson, pastor  
First Church, Saltillo

Steve Bennett, pastor  
Colonial Hills Church,  
Savannah

Wendell Buschle, pastor  
First Church, Bay St. Louis

W. C. Coker, member  
First Church, Jackson

W. C. Harmon, pastor  
First Church, Newton

W. C. Kirk, member  
First Church, Gulfport

W. C. Lane, pastor  
First Church, Holly Springs

Robert Perry, pastor  
Macedonia Church,  
Brookhaven

Odean Puckett, pastor  
First Church, Natchez

David Sellers, pastor  
Tylertown Church, Tylertown

Robert Upchurch, member  
Calvary Church, Tupelo

William Webb, interim pastor  
Fellowship Church, Meridian

Kiely White, pastor  
First Church, Gulfport

Note: Executive Committee officers  
will be elected at the committee's  
meeting on Dec. 3, 1996.

## Pastor's Conference features Mississippi, SBC preachers

The 1996 Mississippi Baptist Pastor's Conference on Oct. 28 at First Church, Jackson, featured an afternoon slate of all-Mississippi pastors followed by a trio of Southern Baptist preachers from outside the state for the evening session.

Don Boone, pastor of Agricola Church, Agricola, brought the first message.

Tom Atwood, pastor of First Church, Oxford, followed Boone with a sermon based on 1 Cor. 15.

Atwood was later chosen as president-elect of the pastor's conference, replacing Kara Blackard, pastor of Wheeler Grove Church in Corinth.

Blackard assumed the president's position from Clark Stewart, pastor of Harmony

Church, Crystal Springs.

Dean Sewart, pastor of First Church, McLain, preached next and was followed by Blackard, who closed out the afternoon session.

Fred Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Church, Mobile, Ala., opened with evening session with a sermon on Isaiah 64.

O.S. Hawkins, pastor of First Church, Dallas, preached on Eph. 1:4, and was followed by a sermon on II Kings 17 delivered by Jim Merritt, pastor of First Church, Snellville, Ga.

Ronnie Cottingham, Agricola-based music evangelist, led the musical program. "Gold City," a Nashville gospel quartet, also performed at the evening session.



Officers of the 1997 Mississippi Baptist Pastor's Conference include president-elect Tom Atwood (left), pastor of First Church, Oxford; and president Kara Blackard, pastor of Wheeler Grove Church, Corinth. Atwood was chosen president-elect Oct. 28 by attendees at the 1996 pastor's conference at First Church, Jackson, while Blackard served as 1996 president-elect and moves up to president for 1997. (Photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)



## JUST FOR THE RECORD

**Wheeler Grove Church, Corinth**, will have Harvest Day on Nov. 17. Activities will include Sunday School, 10 a.m.;

worship, 10:30 a.m.; lunch; and special singing in the afternoon with Jan Lamhaug. The Inspirations will perform at Wheeler Grove Church on Nov. 21 at 7 p.m.

Week night services will be at 7 p.m. For more information, call (601) 584-7880.

Youth and children of **Leaf River Church, Smith Association**, will sponsor a Harvest Festival on Nov. 16. The festival will begin at 6 p.m.

**Immanuel Church, Vicksburg**, will celebrate its 50th anniversary on Nov. 9 and 10. Activities on Saturday will include registration at 4:30 p.m.; followed by supper; music by Dykes Cupstid & Cornerstone; and Tom Rayburn, former pastor, message. Sunday activities will include registration at 9:30 a.m.; followed by music, testimonies, praise, Gene Blailock, former pastor, message; and dinner at noon. Riley Harper, former music minister, will direct the music for both days. For more information, call the church at (601) 636-2238.

**New Life Fellowship Church and First Church**, both of Jackson, will host A Sunday School Tune-Up Seminar on Nov. 8 and 9 at Primos Northgate, Jackson. The seminar is for Sunday School teachers and those who think they might want to participate in their churches' educational programs. Cliff Estes of Shreveport, La., will be the speaker. A native of Laurel, Estes will be speaking on "What The Word Can Do For You." For more information or to make reservations call Chris Howie at (601) 982-2406.



**Emmanuel Church, Ocean Springs**, held its GA Award Ceremony with 16 girls participating. GAs pictured (top to bottom, from left) are Phyllis Coleman, (leader), Sandra Sellers (leader), Jacqueline Enos, Jasmine Pendas, Brandi St. Cyr, Holly Bridwell, Erin Holloway, Emily Melvin, Candice Sherman, Cindy Sellers, Jana Melvin, Deanna Frasier, Kristen Sepe, Jessie St. Cyr, Heather Bridwell, and Jennifer Beaugez.

**Daniel Memorial Church, Jackson**, will sponsor an organ workshop for church organists and ministers of music on Nov. 16. The workshop will begin at 9 a.m. and conclude at 1 p.m. with lunch provided. Dennis Johnson, organist at First Presbyterian Church in Baton Rouge, La., will be the guest clinician. For more information or to make reservations through Nov. 12, contact Patsy Simpson at 956-9047 or 1-800-783-3056.

**Calvary Church, Durant**, will have a Youth Emphasis Day on Nov. 10 at 6 p.m. Daniel Blaylock will be the guest speaker. Barney Watkins is pastor.

**Pike Association will sponsor "M" Night Discipleship Training Rally** at First Church, Summit, 7 p.m., on Nov. 18. For more information call (601) 276-2415.

**A Victory Crusade will be held at Pineview Church, Lebanon Association**, Nov. 10-13, with Alan Celoria, evangelist, and The Celoria Family Singers. Sunday services will be held at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.

### Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
copyright 1996

IAY YKS KHAV NHZSYK,  
CTF THQ DX, QKST YKS  
YVAS QHVXKDMMSVX  
XKCUU QHVXKDM YKS  
WCYKSV DT XMDVDY  
CTF DT YVAYK: WHV  
YKS WCYKSV XSSOSYK  
XANK YH QHVXKDM,  
KDZ.

GHKT WHAV: YQSTYE-

YKVSS

Clue: Z equals M

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Revelation Twenty-One: Seven

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## Staying Well Informed

### Baptist's Chemical Dependency Center Celebrates 20 Years

In September, more than 300 people gathered in Jackson to celebrate a milestone—the 20th birthday of the Mississippi Baptist Chemical Dependency Center (CDC), Mississippi's first and longest operating hospital-based chemical dependency unit.

Since its inception in 1976, this remarkable program has helped more than 10,000 people change their lives. The CDC's scope of services has expanded and grown to include specialized inpatient, outpatient and day-treatment programs for adults, adolescents and their families. CDC's alumni association continues to be the largest and most active of any treatment center in the state.

The CDC provides a far-reaching ministry to people who are often at the end of their emotional resources. When a person develops a dependency on alcohol or drugs, the results can be tragic. Counselors can help open doors of communication and assist the recovering addicts in getting back on their feet and resuming healthy lives.

"We want to reach out to help our community deal with the issues which can make life difficult for people today," said Center Director Joanne Hartwig. "We're proud of what the CDC has accomplished, and we're building on those achievements with new services."

Most recently, the CDC joined with Life Enrichment Services (LES), a new program designed to provide an expanded range of services aimed at employees' needs. Programs such as CDC and LES help people regain control.

For information about referral or other CDC or LES programs, call the number listed below. You may save a life.

### Understanding the Benefits of Chemical Dependency Counseling

Call 948-MBMC or 1-800-948-MBMC (6262)  
for reservations or more information.



MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST MEDICAL CENTER



ALL SIZES  
SALES AND RENTALS

**CHURCH BUSES**  
#1 MANUFACTURER  
COMPETITIVE PRICING  
**SOUTHEASTERN BUS CO.**  
CLINTON, MS  
1-800-423-9826  
1-601-924-1982



What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS

Matthew 10:27 NAS

November 7, 1996

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Office of Communication.

## Make An Early New Year's Resolution...

Resolve to involve your **YOUTH** in the **CONDUCTING/INSTRUMENTAL/VOCAL FESTIVAL**

- ☞ January 20, 1997 • 6-8 p.m.,  
Petal-Harvey BC, Hattiesburg
- ☞ January 21, 1997 • 6-8 p.m.,  
The Baptist Building, Jackson  
North Oxford BC, Oxford
- ☞ January 23, 1997 • 6-8 p.m.,  
Highland BC, Meridian



### RESOLVE FOR YOUR YOUTH TO

(10th-12th graders) sing solos, lead hymns, and play their instruments for a panel of ministers of music... receiving their encouraging comments... and possibly be invited to participate in the State Four-Part Festival.

### YOUR YOUTH COULD BE RECEIVING SCHOLARSHIPS:

- Partial scholarships to Gulfshore, Ridgecrest or Glorieta Music Conferences
- \$200.00 college music scholarships (doubled when used at a Mississippi Baptist college)

**VOCAL FESTIVAL:** Sing two selections.

**CONDUCTING FESTIVAL:** Direct three hymns or conduct an anthem or instrumental ensemble (on the advanced level).

**INSTRUMENTAL FESTIVAL:** Play a solo piece of literature. (Woodwind, Brass, Strings, Pitched Percussion)

For further information and registration forms, refer to your 1997 Youth Ministry Book, or contact your Church Music Department at 1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson at 968-3800.

**RESOLVE FOR YOUR YOUTH TO SING, LEAD HYMNS AND PLAY INSTRUMENTS IN THEIR OWN CHURCHES!**

## In All Thy Ways

### Christian Performing Arts Festival

**Feb. 28 - March 1**  
**Woodland Hills Baptist Church**  
**Jackson, Mississippi**

**Offering conferences for both the experienced and inexperienced in:**

**Drama**

**Clowning**

**Puppetry**

**Church Recreation**

**Watch for brochure in December.**



*Let's pray this day for...*

**November 8-21, 1996**

**Prayer Ministry Office • P. O. Box 530 • Jackson, MS 39205-0530 • Phone 968-3800, Ext. 3904 • Mississippi PrayerLine 1-800-787-PRAY**

*"The greatest thing anyone can do for God and man is pray. It is not the only thing, but it is the chief thing. The great people of the earth today are the people who pray. I do not mean those who talk about prayer; nor yet those who can explain about prayer; but I mean those people who take time to pray." - S.D. Gordon*

Drug use among teens has risen sharply since 1992. More than a tenth of teens have used drugs in the last month. Pray that they will reject this dangerous habit.

For the Bible Drill Clinics at FBC, Sardis; FBC, Wiggins; Crossgates BC, Brandon - 7-9 p.m. sponsored by Discipleship and Family Ministry.

For the Bible Drill Clinics at FBC, Booneville; FBC, Newton; Meadville BC, Meadville - 7-9 p.m. sponsored by Discipleship and Family Ministry.

Among eighth graders nearly half have used cigarettes and one in four has experienced drunkenness at least once. Pray that they will have good examples so they can avoid smoking and drinking.

For Bible Drill Clinics at N. Greenwood BC, Greenwood; FBC, West Point; 38th Ave. BC, Hattiesburg - 7-9 p.m. sponsored by Discipleship and Family Ministry. For the African-American Fellowship, Victory Temple BC, Greenville, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. sponsored by MEAA

Taiwan Baptist missionaries and volunteers who have served in Taiwan are having a reunion at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Nov. 8-10. Pray that renewed fellowship will bless all. Queen's Court, Camp Garaway, Nov. 8-9, sponsored by WMU

New Christians need guidance as they learn to live for Christ. Pray that they may learn the importance of quiet times and worshiping with others.

For the churches who are beginning their foreign missions emphasis including seasons of prayer and the Lottie Moon Offering for Foreign Missions.

Pray for all government officials who were elected in the November elections whether they be newly elected or re-elected.

The Ten Commandments serve as a standard for how people are to relate to God and to one another. Pray that God's people will live according to His commands.

Pray for family harmony in homes between parents and children and between married couples.

Life is a trust from God but murder is not the only way to take someone's life. Pray that people will avoid carelessly or falsely spoken words.

Ask God to stir up the hearts of Vietnamese Christians living in the U.S. to return to Vietnam to evangelize its 75 million lost citizens.

Give thanks for a new church started in Jordan. Pray this work will spread to touch the millions in Jordan who have never heard the Gospel.

## CENTRAL HILLS REQUIRES NEWER EQUIPMENT

In June 1979 Mississippi Baptists established Central Hills Baptist Retreat near Kosciusko. On this property in Attala County the Brotherhood Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board provides the summer camping program for Royal Ambassadors and Challengers. It also makes the facility available to other departments of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, local Baptist associations, churches and other groups for retreats and conferences.

As a consequence of much use and age, the camp vehicles are in need of replacements. All of the trucks at Central Hills are old and have high mileage. The repairs are becoming more frequent and very costly. The main service truck is having serious transmission trouble and needs major body repairs. The camp also has two other vehicles, a pick-up which is incapable of long road trips and a 12 passenger van, both of which require delicate handling to remain running.

If any of you have a vehicle that you would like to donate to Central Hills to help in their work and ministry with our youth, please contact Dan West at P.O. Box 723, Kosciusko, MS 39090-0723, or please call 601-289-9730.

## GA/ACTEENS Special Days Just for You!

**BLUE MOUNTAIN  
COLLEGE**  
January 18  
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**WILLIAM CAREY  
COLLEGE**  
February 1  
3 - 7 p.m.

**MISSISSIPPI  
COLLEGE**  
February 22  
11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

• Missionaries • Basketball • Testimonies • Cheerleaders • Music

**COST: \$7.50**

(includes basketball game, meal, program and limited insurance)

*Please complete and return the Registration Form below.*

For more information call 1-800-748-1651.

### MISSISSIPPI GA/ACTEENS SPECIAL DAYS 1997 REGISTRATION FORM

Church \_\_\_\_\_ Association \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Event \_\_\_\_\_

**DEADLINE: Monday prior to events**

No refunds after deadline, however substitutions allowed.

Make checks payable to WMU and send to:

GA/Acteens Special Days  
Woman's Missionary Union  
P.O. Box 530  
Jackson, MS 39205

Number of attendees \_\_\_\_\_ x \$7.50 per person = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (total enclosed)



**K**EYS on which fingers play

**E**NCOURAGEMENT in Church Music

**Y**OUTH first through twelfth grade

**B**ELIEVING the value of participation in Church Music

**O**BEYING the Scripture: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed"

**A**LLOWING God to be a guide and strength

**R**EJOICING through accomplishment

**D**EVELOPING of God-given talents

**F**ELLOWSHIP with others

**E**NCOURAGEMENT received from festival leaders, group leaders and judges

**S**ATISFACTION of knowing that prayer + practice = successful presentation

**T**RAINING for witnessing through music at the keyboard

**I**NVOLVEMENT in music for worship

**V**ALUE of a commitment

**A**TTAINING higher goals

**L**OVING the Lord

**S**HARING the Song of Jesus

Area	Location	Leader	Phone
<b>Thursday, January 23, 1997 - 6:30-8:30 p.m.</b>			
Area 2	Harrisburg BC, Tupelo, 1800 W. Main	Darwin Brooks Diane Smith	C-842-6917
Area 4	Fairview BC, Columbus, 127 Airline Road	Slater Murphy	C-328-2924
Area 5	Morrison Heights, Clinton, 201 Morrison Dr.	Carol Durham	H-924-0469
Area 7	FBC McComb, 1700 Delaware Ave.	Mark Moore Carol Watts	C-684-2971 C-684-2971
Area 8	FBC Laurel, 605 Fifth Ave.	Earline Carter	C-649-5710
<b>Friday, January 24, 1997 - 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.</b>			
Area 8	FBC Hattiesburg, 510 W. Pine Street	Kathy Vail	H-264-7443
Area 9	FBC Gulfport, 40 53rd Street	Tammy Turnage	H-896-5566
<b>Saturday, January 25, 1997 - 9:30 a.m. - noon</b>			
Area 1	Colonial Hills, Southaven, 7701 Hwy 51 N.	Elizabeth Cothorn	H-781-2582
Area 3	Second BC, Greenville, 1407 E. Reed Road	Curtis Hatcher	C-355-3343
Area 5	FBC Vicksburg, 1607 Cherry St.	Jim Hess	C-636-2493
Area 5	Alta Woods, Jackson, 168 Colonial Dr.	Wyndy South Bob Jones	H-957-3615 C-372-8651
Area 6	Poplar Springs Drive Baptist, Meridian 4032 Poplar Springs Dr.	Harry Tillery	C-485-5106

## THE OLD GREY MARE AIN'T WHAT SHE USED TO BE

One of the favorite activities provided at Central Hills is a horseback trail ride. During the summer camp sessions and in off-season retreats participants enjoy a mile long ride through the wooded hills. Owning the horses allows the staff to know the horses and to lead a trail ride with the assurance that the riders are provided a safe and exciting experience.

Central Hills has been forced to sell several of the horses they bought when the camp opened in 1979. The age and health conditions of the horses would no longer allow them to work safely on the trail. In fact, Central Hills has only one of the original herd left. The size of the present herd is inadequate to accommodate the activities of the groups that come there for camps and retreats.

Consequently, the camp is in need of horses. The ideal animal would be a six-year-old or older gelding, and gentle enough for a nine-year-old child to ride. If any of you would to give Central Hills a horse or two, please contact Dan West at P.O. Box 723, Kosciusko, MS 39090-0723, or please call 601-289-9730.

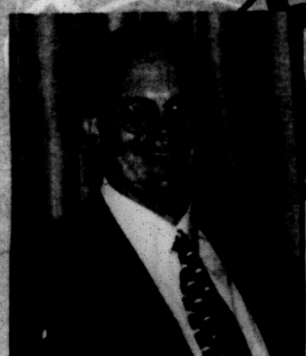




# 1997 Church Orchestra Festival &

Saturday, January 18  
Broadmoor Baptist Church, Jackson

"Let Everything that Hath  
Breath Praise the Lord"



**Bruce Zieger**  
Former trumpet soloist with  
the Air Force Band

The MBSO will be playing at the Evangelism Conference Monday, January 27, 1997, at Broadmoor Baptist Church, Jackson. Rehearsal is at 5 p.m. and the concert is at 6:30 p.m.

## MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA Rehearsal

### Schedule

- 8:00 Registration
- 8:30 Mississippi Baptist  
Symphony Orchestra
- 10:00 B
- 10:20 Broadmoor BC Orchestra
- 10:40 FBC, Madison Orchestra
- 11:00 MBSO Rehearsal
- 12:30 Dismissal

## Registration Deadline for the Orchestra Festival is January 8, 1997.

For more information call the Church Music Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board at 968-3800.

If you are a parent of a missionary and interested in becoming a part of the Missionary Parents Fellowship, please complete the form at the right and return to:  
WMU, Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.

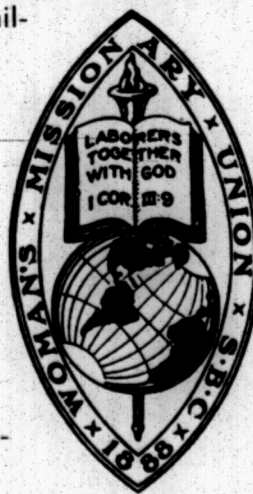
## TO ALL PARENTS OF MISSIONARIES NEW AND OLD: ATTEND THE MISSIONARY PARENTS FELLOWSHIP DINNER

On December 8, 1996, when the Foreign Mission Board holds a commissioning service at First Baptist Church, Jackson, the Mississippi Missionary Parents Fellowship (MPF) will host a dinner for any missionary's parents and/or children. Newly-appointed missionaries' parents will be paired with more experienced Mississippi missionaries' parents according to their area of service.

Edna Ellison, MPF liaison and Women On Mission consultant for the Woman's Missionary Union, explained, "Our parents know the ropes about the area where their children are. They can advise other parents about plane reservations, mail regulations for packages, and e-mail connections for quick

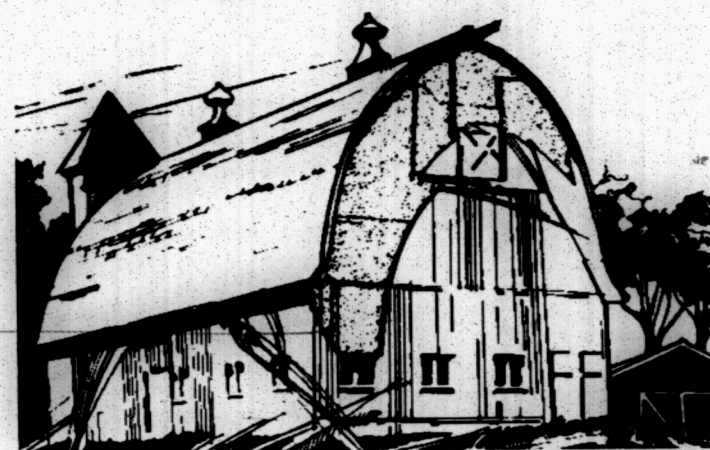
communication with their children. We hope they will be able to allay fears and help other parents through a smooth adjustment."

To join the state Missionary Parents Fellowship or to participate in the dinner, call the WMU Department at 1-800-748-1651 or 601-968-3800 or write WMU, Box 530, Jackson, MS by November 20.



## THANKS TO YOU THE HAY BARNs ARE FULL

Recently, Central Hills made a request of the Brotherhood organizations in Mississippi Baptist churches to help them provide the hay supply to feed the camp's horses as winter feed. As a result of your generosity, Central Hill's cup, or should we say barns, runneth over. The influx has been so great that they have all the hay that they can store. The staff at Central Hills wishes to express a heartfelt "thank you" to all of those wonderful people who gave.



If you intended to donate some hay and didn't, you haven't missed your opportunity yet. The staff asks that you hold it until they have fed part of the current supply and they will be happy to take your donation. They also ask that you continue to pray for their work and ministry through summer camps and retreats at Central Hills.

### MISSIONARY PARENTS FELLOWSHIP

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (DAY) \_\_\_\_\_

(NIGHT) \_\_\_\_\_

MISSIONARY \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

SPOUSE \_\_\_\_\_

CHILDREN \_\_\_\_\_

For further information contact the WMU office at 1-800-748-1651 or in Jackson area 601-968-3800 or you can call Jimmy Walker at 601-223-4309.

# HOUSE TOPS



## PASTOR NEEDED

Editor:

First Baptist Church of Orchard Park, N. Y., is currently in the process of searching for a pastor. This is a congregation in the suburbs of western New York.

Send reference letter with resume to: First Baptist Church Orchard Park, 5933 Big Tree Road, Orchard Park, NY 14127; c/o Pastor Search Committee.

Pastor Search Committee Orchard Park, NY

## BLOWING SMOKE

Editor:

To loosely use the words of former President Reagan, "there they go again."

I read with bewilderment in the Oct. 17 edition of "The Baptist Record" the article entitled "Southern Baptist resolution, others' opposition to tobacco use puts farmers in difficult position" and wondered what is so evil about tobacco.

Is it a moral problem? Then where is the hue and cry over alcohol and gluttony? Perhaps we should tax people according to their weight so (we) could do research on the effects of obesity.

Is it a health problem? Then where is the hue and cry over AIDS that is overloading our health system? Maybe we should tax AIDS patients so we can do AIDS research.

No, the problem is people trying to impose their personal views on others with whom they disagree. "It's a drug," they cry. Well sugar, coffee, cokes, and even food can be addictive. Shall we tax them also?

The reason that we should be against alcohol and drugs is that they are mind altering chemicals that change a person's mental state and make that person unsafe in society.

Finally, in an article in an American Family Association



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

journal an article by Walter Williams of Creators Syndicate, Inc. states that the government has lied to the American people saying, "It is possible that very few, even no, deaths can be attributed to environmental tobacco smoke.... The statistical evidence does not appear to support a conclusion that there are substantial health effects of passive smoking."

Larry Smith, pastor  
Hebron Church, Sardis

## COMMENTS UPSETTING

Editor:

As a Southern Baptist for over 40 years, I am very upset, embarrassed, and ashamed of statements made at the recent Mississippi Baptist Convention and reported in "The Clarion Ledger" (on) Oct. 31, attributed to Steve Jordan and Paul Jones.

If Jordan would research the law on gaming, he would find that the law as written does not allow gaming on "any inland waterway." Misleading and inflammatory statements do not further the cause of Southern Baptists.

More upsetting are Jones' statements. It appears that Jones does not believe that people who eat in a casino, work for companies servicing casinos, or (are) employed in any position at a casino should serve in "any places of trust in our convention."

If Jones believes his statement, I would suggest he con-

sider resigning from his "position of trust" if he has ever purchased gasoline from a convenience store in Louisiana or Florida that sells lottery tickets. If he doesn't think he should resign, then he might want to reacquire himself with the definition of "hypocrisy."

My father, a Southern Baptist minister for over 50 years, taught me that we were to be fishers of men, not an elitist, holier-than-thou religion. Jones' statements are those I do not expect from the Southern Baptist Convention to which I belong.

The statements reported do not paint a picture of a religious denomination that is open to its own members.

John R. Eubanks Jr.  
Terry

## THANKS FOR PRAYERS

Editor:

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus from Tirana, Albania! I wanted to write and thank Mississippi Baptists for their prayers for us as we seek to share the love of Jesus and the power of the gospel with

the wonderful people here in Albania. As you recall, we were appointed in July 1995 by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The Lord Jesus is moving in wonderful ways in this country, and we offer our praise and thanks to him.

This afternoon I baptized three of the most recent converts in our church: Valbona, Pellumb, and Eduart. Valbona is 25 years old and was helped by the European Baptist Federation earlier this year with a life-giving operation in Hamburg, Germany. Since the operation, she has made another life-changing decision, to welcome Jesus into her heart! Pellumb is a 35-year-old man, and Edi is a 22-year-old Gypsy man. Two more individuals have been talking with me about accepting Jesus, as well.

I beg Mississippi Baptists to help us in our work here in Albania and then in Macedonia; to pray that God will continue to draw people to himself and continue to open doors for the gospel.

Rick and Martha Shaw  
CBF missionaries  
Tirana, Albania

## NAMES IN THE NEWS



Rock Hill Church, Wesson, held ground breaking services on Sept. 1 for four new Sunday School rooms. Pictured are James Harris, pastor; Walter Cline, Barry Gemelli, and Suzy Walker, building and grounds committee.

Christopher M. Jones was ordained to the ministry by Bay Vista Church, Biloxi, on Oct. 20. Jones and his wife Lisa are serving as ministers of youth and children at Grace Memorial Church, Gulfport. They have two daughters, Kristian and Bethany.

Steve Price, a graduate of



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## Letters to the editor

Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.

Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.

Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (While church membership is not required, Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)

Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.

Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks.

No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.

When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.



East McComb Church, McComb, recently licensed Floyd Davis to the ministry. Davis and his wife Kaye also received certificates as Mission Service Corp Volunteers. They work with the Pike Association as Church and Community Ministries director. Pictured from left are Rick Kennedy, pastor; Zack Davis, Floyd Davis, Kaye Davis, Dusty Davis, and Gary Fuller, director of missions for Pike Association.

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## Robert King, 51, pastor, dies

Robert Lee King, 51, died Oct. 8 in Meridian. Services were held Oct. 10 at Pine Bluff Church, Sebastopol. King, a Choctaw Indian, was pastor of Pine Bluff Church. He previously pastored Corinth Church, Tucker, and Hopewell Church, Standing Pine.

Survivors include his wife Mary Dean King of Sebastopol; mother, Sally Mae King of Sebastopol; daughter, Pamela Solomon of Philadelphia; son, Cory James King of Philadelphia; three sisters, Virginia King Sharp, Annie Kate Bell, both of Forest, and Sarah Hickman of Sebastopol; and five grandchildren.

## REVIVAL DATES

**Crystal Ridge (Winston):** Nov. 8-11; services each night at 7:30 with regular services Sunday at 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Dave Truitt, Brandon, evangelist; Wayne Hill, pastor.

**Grace, Philadelphia:** Nov. 10-13; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m.; Roc Collins, Hattiesburg, evangelist; Dennis Duvall, pastor.

**Chunky, Chunky:** Nov. 17-21; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Thurs., 7 p.m.; Bill Webb, Meridian, evangelist; Gary Thorne, music; Wayne Campbell, pastor.

**Lena, Lena:** Nov. 17-20; Sunday, 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 11:45 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Carter Elmore, evangelist; Edd Brashier, music; Tom Stevens, pastor.

**Lakeshore (Metro):** Nov. 17-20; Sunday, 10:30 a.m.; 7 p.m. nightly; Mon.-Wed., meals served at 5:30 p.m.; Alan Celoria, evangelist, and The Celoria Family Singers, Matthew Debord, pastor.

**Bethlehem, Pinola:** Nov. 15-17; Fri. and Sat., 7 p.m.; Sunday, 10 a.m. and dinner on the grounds; Jerome McLendon, pastor, evangelist; The Castle Family, music.



## Checking out the displays

Bill Hardy, coordinator of the Partnership Missions office of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, chats with Ralph Cain, director of outreach for the Lee Association, Tupelo, in the exhibit hall at First Church, Jackson, during the Mississippi Baptist Convention. (Photo by Carl M. White)

## First Church, Wiggins, to celebrate 100th year

First Church, Wiggins, will celebrate its 100th anniversary on Nov. 16 and 17. The theme will be "A Century to Celebrate — A Future to Fulfill."

Saturday activities will begin at 3 p.m. with a time of fellowship followed by a chili supper.

The centennial worship service on Sunday will begin at 10:30 a.m.

A covered dish lunch will follow the services.

Preparations are also being made for a 10:30 a.m. celebration for children from 4 years old to third grade.

## STAFF CHANGES

**David Oliver** has been called as associate pastor/minister of music of **Crossgates Church, Brandon**, effective Oct. 1. He graduated from Mississippi College, attended New Orleans Seminary, then received his master's degree from Mississippi College. Previously he served at Immanuel Church, Germantown, Tenn.

**Woolmarket Church, Biloxi**, has called **Sam Wheat** as minister of music and education, effective Oct. 28. A native of Anniston, Ala., Wheat received his education at Jacksonville (Alabama) State University, and Southwestern Seminary. His previous place of service was First Church, Hughes Springs, Texas. Paul Crowley is pastor.

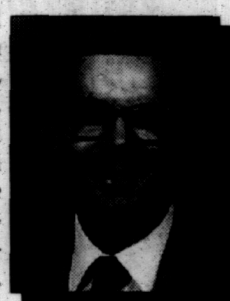
**Lakeview Church, Leland**, has called **Scott Frank** as full-time pastor. He has served as interim pastor since February. He previously served in Arkansas.

**Hebron Church, Grenada**, has called **Harold W. Simmons** as interim pastor, effective Oct. 20. He is a retired Air Force Chaplain and has pastored churches in Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, and Maryland.

**Ebenezer Church, Senatobia**, has called **JD Meredith** to serve as associate pastor effective Oct. 27. Meredith holds a master's degree from Mid-America Seminary. He is currently enrolled at Mid-America

Seminary, as a Ph.D. student. Michael Williams is pastor.

**First Church, Stonewall**, will honor **Albert McMullen**, pastor for 16 years, with a tribute and reception on Nov. 10 at 2 p.m. He is retiring from the pastorate after 38 1/2 years in the ministry. McMullen has served churches in Clarke, Scott, Neshoba, Marion, and Winston counties. He will be available for supply work, interim, and revivals. He can be contacted at 2257 Highway 496, Meridian, MS, 39301, or call (601) 483-4680.



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## Meridian area crusade reaps harvest

Over 40 local churches supported an evangelistic crusade in Lauderdale Association on September 22-26, according to Wayne Edwards, Lauderdale director of Missions.

Birmingham-based Scott Dawson Evangelistic Association team led the five day crusade effort.

James Ruffin, pastor of Popular Springs Church, Meridian, was the coordinator for the crusade, which was two years in the planning.

According to Ruffin, 311 decision cards were completed by individuals making a spiritual decision. There were 172 first-time professions of faith; 42 seeking assurance of salvation; 48 making a spiritual rededication; and 49 "other" decisions.

These varied from seeking God's will to facing a personal problem, Ruffin said.

He indicated that the names were shared with the church of preference as indicated on the card. If no preference was given, the cards were assigned to a church for follow-up.

Attendance for the five day crusade averaged around 2500, Ruffin said. The highest attendance, approximately 4500, was on Wednesday evening, youth night. Rain lowered attendance on Thursday evening.

Scott Dawson, full-time evangelist, preached. Music was led by music evangelist Dwayne Moore. A choir and orchestra made up of approximately 300 local people helped provide special music.

## HOMECOMINGS

**First, Lauderdale:** Nov. 10; day of celebration of singing with The Mayfields; lunch to follow morning worship service.

**Athens (Simpson):** Nov. 10; 75th anniversary; 11 a.m., worship, Chris Layton, speaker; lunch at noon; afternoon singing; John W. Coleman, pastor.

**Bethlehem, Pinola:** Nov. 10; services, 10 a.m.; lunch at noon; Jerome McLendon, pastor, speaker.

**Ludlow, Ludlow:** Nov. 10; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; lunch at noon; mission presentation, 1:30 p.m.; Danny

Panther, guest speaker.

**Horseshoe, Tchula:** Nov. 10; worship, 10:45 a.m.; covered dish in fellowship hall; singing in the afternoon following lunch; Donald Riley, Kokomo, guest speaker; Bill Blount, pastor.

**Bogue Chitto (Lincoln):** Nov. 10; worship, 11 a.m.; noon meal; 1 p.m. singing; Joel Brister, Amite, La., evangelist; Tom Moak, Bogue Chitto, music; Bill Hudson, pastor.

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**COVINGTON-JEFF DAVIS BAPTIST ASSOCIATION** is taking resumes for a Director of Missions. Send resumes to: Covington-Jeff Davis Baptist Association, Personnel Committee, Rt. 1 Box 258 A, Collins, MS 39428. Deadline for receiving resumes is November 10, 1996.

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## BAPTIST COLLEGE NEWS

Registration for William Cary College's annual homecoming is set from 3-5 p.m., Nov. 15; and 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. on Nov. 16 in the lobby of Lawrence Hall. Following the Friday registration there will be an exhibit of selections from

the Sarah Gillespie collection of Mississippi artists in the Lucile Parker Gallery. A Missions Plaza Brick Dedication will take place at 3:15 p.m.

Some of the scheduled events for Saturday include a Science Fellowship Breakfast

for medical, dental, science, and mathematics alumni at 8:30 a.m. in Wilkes Dining Hall and a reception in Chain Garden at 10 a.m. The Annual Awards Luncheon will honor the Distinguished Alumnus of the Year and the Mississippi Woman's College Alumna of the Year at 12:30 p.m. A Pep Rally will be in the Oak Grove Shopping Center, Nov. 9 at 2

p.m. For time and place of other activities contact the Alumni Office at (601) 582-6107.

**Mississippi College** Communication Department's Little Theatre will present the comedy "The Man Who Came To Dinner" on Nov. 14, 15, 16, 18, and 19 at 7 p.m. and on Nov. 17 at 2 p.m. in Aven Little Theatre. The comedy is under the director of Cindi Stokes of Madison, Communication instructor. General admission is \$5, tickets for students, faculty, and senior citizens are \$3. For additional information and to make reservations call (601) 925-3453.

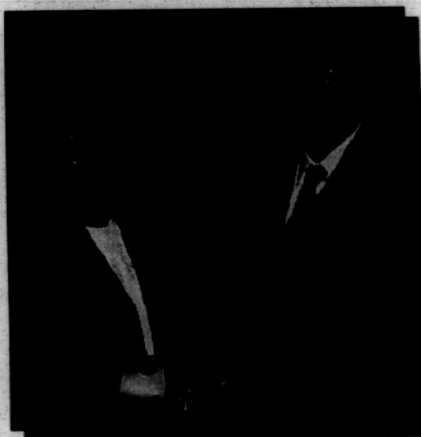
The William Carey College (WCC) Baptist Student Union (BSU) will sponsor a concert by Mitch Rayborn, a contemporary Christian artist and alumnus of WCC, Nov. 14, at 7 p.m. The Carey BSU vocal ensemble will accompany Rayborn during the performance. For more information about the concert call Tim Glaze at (601) 582-6386.

**Robert T. Quarles** has joined the staff of the Institutional Advancement Department of Mississippi College (MC) as director of Gift Planning. Prior to joining MC, he served as vice president and trust officer for Trustmart Bank and Union Planters Bank. Quarles is a native Jacksonian and a graduate of MC (1973), the University of Colorado Trust School, and the Advance Estate Planning School at Cornell University in New York.

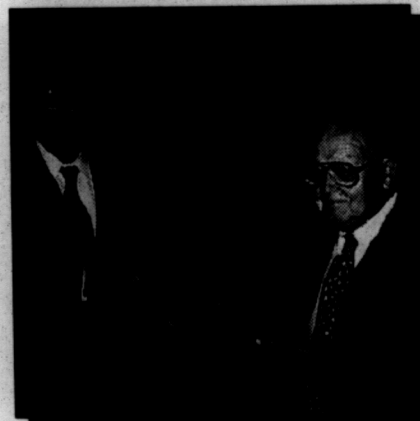


Quarles

**Blue Mountain College Board Members Honored** - Douglas McDonald and Lena Gregory are each presented plaques of appreciation by Blue Mountain college board of trustees chairman Ray Sarter of Ripley. Each completed six years of service. McDonald is a member of Straight Bayou Church, Sharkey-Issaquena Association. Gregory is a member of First Church Corinth, Alcorn Association.



Gregory



McDonald



## MISSIONARY NEWS

**Dennis and Janet Brotherton**, missionaries to Korea, are on the field (address: Jung Dong 201-5, Taejon 306-010 Korea). He is a native of West Plains, Mo. The former Janet Millier, born in Greenville, lived in Germany, California, and Tulsa, Okla. while growing up.

**James and Carolyn McAtee**, missionaries to Southern Asia and the Pacific, are on the field (address: #9 Marine Vista, Neptune Court #20-07, Singapore 449-033). Both are natives of Jackson; she is the former Carolyn Mahaffey.

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## LIFE AND WORK

### Family ties

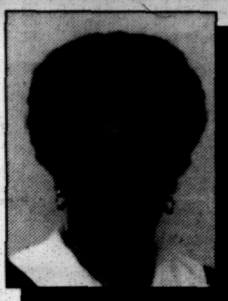
Ex. 20; Mark 7; Eph. 6

Because God is sovereign, He has the right to be Lord of all our relationships. God made guidelines for our lives because He knew what would be best for us. This commandment to honor parents is often misapplied by directing it only toward young children. In its original context, it was given directly to adults. Because God is so loving and concerned for us, He wants the best for us. The commandments were not given as an option from which believers can choose to obey - they were given as direct commands from a loving Father who knew the needs of His children.

**Honor your parents** (Ex. 20:12). The first four commandments focus on a relationship with God. The following commandments address one's rela-

tionship with others. The first relationship addressed concerns how to relate to parents. The word "honor" means to take seriously, to give importance in one's life, and to pay attention to their place in our lives. Also, honor means to show high respect and esteem to another person.

The concept of honor is closely related to responsibility. Children have the responsibility of obeying their parents. As children mature, they are to assume the responsibility of listening and respecting. This commandment gives worth and significance to the parents. The child-parent affiliation is a two way relationship. As parents help to mold the child in the early years,



Cynthia Douglas

they need to role model these traits of listening, caring, respecting, and a true family love.

Many adults face the difficulty of dealing with aging parents at the very same time they are experiencing other major adjustments with their own family unit. Concern about parents' health, happiness, where they will live, and who will care for them has always faced people. God knows these difficult times can only be faced adequately when done so in the framework of His love. Love for God and love for parents makes these decisions and relationships turn out best for everyone. God is honored when this commandment is obeyed. A long life is promised to those who obey the commandment to honor parents.

**Don't shirk your duty** (Mark 7:9-13). God intended for Christian stewardship to include giving to God's work and taking care of the physical needs of the

family. In Mark 7, Jesus is accusing the Scribes of setting aside the command to honor their parents because of Corban.

What was Corban? It was a gift set aside for God and forbidden to be used for anything else. The purpose in taking the Corban vow seemed perfectly religious - to dedicate one's possessions to God's temple. Jesus said they were neglecting their parents by declaring their money or goods to be Corban. Jesus said it is not right to take the Corban vow if it kept people from caring for their parents. Christians have a responsibility to lovingly care for their parents. God's plan is not the world's plan we see today. God created the family unit and intended for it to honor Him. Love and responsibility go hand in hand. Don't shirk your duty!

**A reciprocal responsibility** (Eph. 6:1-4). The commandment to honor parents is found twice in the Old Testament and is quoted six times in the New Testament (Matt. 15:4; 19:19;

Mark 7:10; 10:19; Luke 18:20, and Eph. 6:2). In this passage, Paul is speaking directly to children as he says to obey and honor your parents. Further, he says the commandment includes the promise of a long life on earth.

The parent-child relationship is a reciprocal plan. When children need nurture, the parents are to provide it. As the parents age, the children are to provide for the needs of the parents. To honor parents involves love, respect and attentiveness. In today's mobile society, distances often separate family members. However, distance is no excuse for neglect. Americans are blessed with many forms of fast communication. Paul is saying to children to respect and esteem your parents, and as you mature, this relationship of love and respect will deepen. The key question is: What can I do to improve my family life? Honor God by honoring your family!

*Douglas is a member of First Church, Columbus.*

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Forgiveness of sin

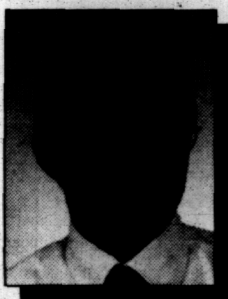
Matthew 8:1-9:35

Forgiveness is a commodity everyone needs. One would think that demand would decrease supply and drive up the cost, but that is not the case. The Bible teaches that God wants to forgive people without limit as long as they desire to be forgiven. The Bible also teaches that Jesus has the authority to forgive sins, a claim that caused a furor during his lifetime.

**Jesus' Authority is Made Clear** (9:1-2). Jesus crossed the Sea of Galilee, headed west from Gadara to Capernaum. Upon his arrival in Capernaum, some people brought to Jesus a man who was paralyzed. They clearly hoped that Jesus would heal the man of his paralysis, for the healing powers of Jesus had become public knowledge. Jesus surprised the crowd, however,

Rather than making a promise of healing, Jesus told the paralyzed man to cheer up, for "your sins are forgiven." Jesus was not claiming any connection between the man's paralysis and any sin he had committed. Rather, he was pointing out to the man and to the crowd that spiritual health is eternally more important than physical health. He also was taking a natural opportunity to teach the religious leaders a lesson.

**Jesus' Authority Is Challenged** (9:3). No sooner had Jesus told the man that his sins were forgiven than the scribes began to exclaim among themselves, "This man is blaspheming." They held that only God could forgive sins. For any human being to pronounce for-



Ronald Bishop

giveness upon another is to take the place of God, the equivalent of claiming to be God. Jesus had insulted them with his statement that he could pronounce forgiveness upon this man. They could not let his claim go unchallenged.

**Jesus' Authority Is Validated** (9:4-7). Jesus' accusers did not need to voice their complaint against him, for he knew their very thoughts. He knew that these religious experts were considering his pronouncement in light of all that they had been taught about God and orthodoxy. Jesus was familiar with their arguments and anticipated their criticism.

Jesus accused them of having evil thoughts. In their attempt to vindicate God and show this teacher to be a fraud, they were disparaging the unique son of God. Their rejection of the goodness of God displayed before their eyes was the height of evil. There was little hope of convinc-

ing people who could not be convinced in this crowd.

Jesus knew that their natural response would be to demand proof of his outrageous claim to be able to forgive sins. He did not wait for their demand. Instead, he asked them which would be easier, to pronounce one forgiven or healed? Forgiveness cannot be seen, but healing usually can be easily validated. Only one with real power would be so bold as to pronounce one healed. Jesus extended to the religious doubters a courtesy usually denied, he offered them proof of his forgiving power. He turned to the paralyzed man and ordered him to rise, take up his bed, and go home. The newly-healed man obeyed the master and left the scene.

**Jesus' Authority is Acknowledged** (9:8). The healing of the paralytic caused an impact not only on the scribes but on the remainder of the crowd as well. Jesus' claim to be able to forgive sins was accompanied by the visible ability to heal diseases that had before had gone unresolved.

The first reaction of the crowds was fear. They knew that they were in the presence of power that greatly surpassed human power. The crowd realized that the power was from God, and that Jesus was using the power for the good of others. This knowledge caused the crowd to glorify God. They thought it marvelous that God had given such great power to a man for the good of mankind.

**Jesus' Association with Sinners** (9:9-35). Jesus amazed many people not only by forgiving sinners but also by openly associating with them. He included a tax collector among the Twelve. He even ate with tax collectors and other sinners, choosing to spend his time with them rather than with the religious leaders. Jesus' reason was clear—sinners were his reason for coming to earth. It is they who need him. His mission is to those who have need.

*Bishop teaches philosophy and religion at Jones County Junior College, Ellisville.*

## FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

### Experiencing the unbelievable

2 Kings 24:20b-25:12

More than once in my ministry I have heard someone say, I never thought it would happen to me. They may have been alluding to anything from a sudden death in the family, a family member caught with an illegal substance, a house burned or flooded or the announcement of cancer. To live in a world like ours without ever experiencing the unexpected would be a blessing indeed. Unfortunately, just such things do happen. The inhabitants of Jerusalem thought they too were immune to the unthinkable. The day came however when their worst fears were realized. Though for years prophets of God had predicted chaos unless revival

swept the city, the day came when the enemy surrounded the city and a waiting game ensued. King Zedekiah had followed in a line of leaders that were gradually leading the people astray. He inherited therefore an already bad situation. Instead of turning things around, matters of rebellion only got worse.

The Jews of Jerusalem had falsely believed that they were insulated against the punishment of God. They were convinced that God's promise to David would assure them a king forever in Jerusalem (24:20-25:3). They developed a sense of false security that told them that



Jim Phillips

behavior really didn't matter when it came to God's chosen people. They were wrong! Zedekiah attempted to flee from the coming judgement which God allowed by way of Babylon, only to be captured and carried away into captivity. His own family was killed before his eyes and then his eyes were gouged out before carrying him away to Babylon. Jerusalem was surrounded and the people starved until they no longer had the strength to ward off the enemy. All along they must have continued to declare, "This can't be happening to us."

One of the saddest things for me to watch is a family rummaging through their cherished belongings following a flood or fire. That seems to cause a deeper wound that cuts into the fiber of their souls. For the inhabi-

tants of Jerusalem, the Babylonians ransacking the temple must have been just such an experience. The fact that God seemed to be absent while they tore apart their place of worship must have added to the emotional upheaval of it all. Zedekiah and the other leaders of Judah thus experienced the unthinkable. Their collective effort of bad decision making led to the loss of their nation, their city and for some, their family. What should have been a series of generations receiving God's richest blessings had become a living nightmare that wouldn't go away.

Are any of us or our families immune from such an unthinkable thing in our day? Unfortunately, not in the least. God's Word directs us all identically that if we refuse to be obedient to his leading, we too can be brought into subjection against our wills. God has

declared, "Those who honor me I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained" (1 Sam. 2:30b). Judah had numerous opportunities to repent and believe but they instead trusted in their history with God as a blanket of security.

One of the favorite songs of many include the phrase, "God shed His grace on Thee." Just because that has been true in the past is not a guarantee for the future. May God give us the integrity of heart to acknowledge our failures and repent of them. May we ask for his mercy upon us and our families so as to receive his blessings and not his judgements. No one is beyond either. May it never be heard from our lips due to our own failure before God, I never thought it could happen to me.

*Phillips is pastor, North Greenwood Church, Greenwood.*





# THE VILLAGE VIEW

## The Baptist Children's Village

Ronny E. Robinson, Executive Director  
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*Go Light Your World* is the theme for The Baptist Children's Village 1997 centennial celebration. Following a video presentation, pastors were presented with a one-time challenge at The Mississippi Baptist Convention to help meet the needs of ALL hurting children in Mississippi. The need is great for extensive psychological and psychiatric care for emotionally disturbed children in our society.

For information on how you or your church can be involved in this ministry call Chrystelle Thames at 601-922-2242 or write P. O. Box 27, Clinton, MS 39060-0027. "Thank You" to all who visited our booth and helped us drink 38 gallons of BCV

Convention punch and lots of coffee. We enjoyed the visit !!!



BCV children of all ages enjoyed face painting, games, prizes, food and fellowship at a Fall Festival on the India Nunnery Campus October 30, led by Mississippi College BSU students. A guest appearance of a special, juggling clown was also a highlight of the evening. Mississippi College BSU volunteers are worship leaders at regular worship services, tutors, and friend to children and youth at The Baptist Children's Village. MC BSU is an asset to the BCV ministry as they consistently help provide individual attention to children who are starved for human compassion and a patient, listening ear.



Baptist Children's Village residents, staff and guests enjoyed barber shop music by Magnolia Chorus, Mississippi Crossroads Chapter of the Sweet Adelines and women's quartet, Mississippi Sound. Bob Catlett, BCV staff member is a member of Magnolia Chorus and was responsible for scheduling the group to perform in Powell Chapel on The India Nunnery Campus.

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Associational WML Directors: If you have not called to schedule your BCV centennial birthday party, please do so as soon as possible. For information or to schedule a party you may call Chrystelle Thames 601-922-2242.

Let's Fight our World In 1997.



## Jesus Christ requests the honor of your presence in heaven!

YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT  
NOW!

Simple share the following  
prayer with God in your own  
words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need  
you.  
(*I have sinned.*)
2. I want to be forgiven for  
my sin and set free from  
eternal death.  
(*I repent.*)
3. I believe Jesus died and  
rose from the grave to for-  
give my sins and to restore  
my relationship with you.  
(*I believe in Jesus.*)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus  
Christ into my life. From  
this time on, I want to live  
in a loving relationship  
with Him.  
(*I receive Christ as my  
Savior and Lord.*)

But as many as received  
Him, to them He gave the  
right to become children of  
God, even to those who  
believe in His name  
John 1:12

If you make a decision for  
Jesus Christ today, contact a  
local Baptist church for spiri-  
tual guidance.

# Expert: gene map poses serious questions

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—  
With the completion of the  
map of the human genetic  
structure, perhaps by the end  
of the decade, the new millen-  
nium will include the cure of  
many diseases but also will  
pose incredible moral  
dilemmas that accompany  
the capacity to "control  
every aspect of genetic  
makeup," an analyst of  
emerging trends pre-  
dicted.

Arnold Brown,  
chairman of Weiner,  
Edrich, Brown, a New  
York issues detection  
firm, overviewed 18  
social, economic,  
political, and tech-  
nological trends in  
an Oct. 16 presen-  
tation to  
employees of  
the Baptist  
Sunday School  
Board.

Biological issues, "per-  
haps more than any other,  
require intervention of reli-  
gious institutions to ask  
the moral questions,"  
Brown said.

"It is necessary that there  
be a set of moral guideposts  
to help us deal with the  
power in this area."

On the positive side, he  
predicted "advances in genetic  
understanding" will lead to the  
cure of many diseases and the  
potential "for enabling people to  
live not only long lives but long,  
productive lives."

In other areas, a growing  
interest in religion, spirituali-  
ty and stewardship of life,  
including a redefinition of  
the separation of church and  
state, led Brown's list of  
social trends.

"There has been a sense  
growing in recent years that  
separation of church and state  
should not necessarily mean  
the separation of religion and

state," Brown said.

"This includes awareness  
that we cannot have a morally  
based public life without a reli-  
gious component in it.

"This will impose on reli-  
gious institutions the need  
to take stronger moral,  
religious stands, and take  
them publicly," he said.

While violent crime is  
registering a slight  
decrease, Brown  
noted that concern  
about it is increas-  
ing because the  
nature of violent  
crime is changing.

In the past,  
many victims of  
violent crime  
knew their per-  
petrators whereas now  
"over one-  
half of violent  
murders are by  
unknown assailants.

"It is the senseless  
random violence that's  
making people so  
afraid," he said.

He predicted random  
and senseless violence  
will increase.

Brown said racial ten-  
sion in the country will  
gradually be outstripped  
by tension between classes.

"We are seeing a gradual  
emergence of a kind of culture  
in which race is not as impor-  
tant as it used to be, especially  
among young people," he  
noted.

In another area, people see  
in the continuing increase in  
options a corresponding gain  
in power and freedom,  
Brown said.

However, he emphasized  
while people want more choic-  
es, they may exercise their free-  
dom by using only a small  
range of what is available to  
them.

A business or a church

should provide choices for peo-  
ple but also "help them to see  
their best option," Brown said.

A major negative effect of  
options is "the more options  
people have the more quickly  
they become bored," he said.

"As a result, our politicians  
now believe people are too  
bored to listen to anything  
more than 7 seconds."

Society is experiencing a shift  
from what Brown called "found  
identity to made identity."

In the past, a person's iden-  
tity was largely shaped by his or  
her affiliations — family, job,  
religion, education.

"We now live in a time  
where it's increasingly possible  
for people not only to change  
identities but to find multiple  
identities," Brown said.

"Having multiple identities  
is seen as a good way to cope  
with the pace of change and  
complexity of society."

Related to identities, Brown  
predicted people will group  
themselves in new kinds of  
communities, such as cyber-  
space, where they are not bound  
by geography or even time.

In his final social trend,  
Brown cited a movement  
toward individual responsibil-  
ity and self-reliance, "in a sense

a return to the roots of the  
Protestant ethic. The era of enti-  
tlement is coming to an end."

In the economic arena,  
Brown said consumers are  
"becoming more informed and  
assertive instead of passive and  
uninformed. People are coming  
to expect things such as cus-  
tomization."

The future will include the  
development of a large global  
middle class in contrast with  
the present where the middle  
class is largely a Western phe-  
nomenon, he said.

"My guess is we will see a  
global economic boom of huge  
proportions," Brown said.

Within 10 years, he esti-  
mated, the world's middle  
class could swell to 2-3 billion  
people.

The economic boom will be  
accompanied by a "great  
worldwide emphasis on mate-  
rialism" that will be followed  
by a significant hunger for  
meaning in life, he said.

With the collapse of the  
former Soviet Union and the  
potential for conflict between  
two great world superpow-  
ers virtually non-existent,  
"people are now looking for  
other things to fight over,"  
Brown said.



## LifeAnswers

Ron Mumbower, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

From my mailbox:

I read with interest your  
reponse to the woman about the  
"community of faith" (Oct. 24  
issue). You quoted the Bible that  
"God is a God of peace, not con-  
fusion." Given the following  
verses, — Gen. 11:6-7, 2 Sam.  
12:11, 1 Kings 22:23, Isa. 45:7,  
Matt. 10:34-36 — it is clear that  
the Bible contains two versions of  
what God is and is not. You may  
offer your personal opinion that  
God is a God of peace, but you  
may not use the Bible as your jus-  
tification for that position.

The portion of my answer  
that you quote was edited for  
space before it appeared in the  
newspaper, which may have  
affected the context.

This is what I actually  
wrote: "Jesus said, 'I have  
come that you might have  
peace (John 16:33). Scripture  
also tells us that our God is  
not a God of confusion (1 Cor.  
14:33).'"

The verses you quote do  
show a God who is righteous  
and a judge. There are always  
consequences for sin. Thanks  
for the opportunity to clarify  
my answer.

You recently addressed the  
"age of accountability" (Oct. 24  
issue). My reading has convinced  
me that historical Southern  
Baptist principles closely (if not  
absolutely) adhered to the teach-  
ings of the Doctrines of Grace,  
and that Southern Baptists have  
somewhat moved away from that.  
It seems to me that the concept of  
age of accountability may have  
arisen as believers became less  
familiar with the absolute sover-  
eignty of God and the Doctrines  
of Grace. If the age of account-  
ability teaching means that peo-  
ple are born in a saved state, from  
which they fall once they reach an  
age when they can differentiate  
between sin and obedience, then I  
do not think the doctrine of age of  
accountability is scriptural.  
What I am thinking is that the  
age of accountability doctrine is  
man-created to fill the void creat-  
ed when the Doctrine of  
Unconditional Election is reject-  
ed, based on a misunderstanding  
of the impaired nature of man's  
free will. We have a hard time  
conceiving of a just and righteous  
God sending babies and persons  
with mental retardation to Hell.  
So, we created a teaching of "age  
of accountability" to make us feel  
better about the whole thing.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530,  
Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of cri-  
sis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.



## Merritt meets Francis

James Merritt (left), pastor of First Church, Snellville, Ga.,  
talks with Rossie Francis, pastor of Grace Temple Church in  
Gulfport, after the Oct. 28 evening session of the Mississippi  
Baptist Pastor's Conference at First Church, Jackson. Merritt was  
the final speaker at the 1996 pastors' gathering. (Photo by  
William H. Perkins Jr.)